

HONORING WILSON COUNTY,  
TEXAS

## HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 2, 2010*

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Wilson County, Texas on its sesquicentennial year. It was 150 years ago when Wilson County was founded in south Texas by an act of the state legislature. The area is rich in culture and history and serves a great part to the state of Texas.

Before the founding of the county, the first Spanish explorers traveled through the area in the early eighteenth century and used the land mostly for ranching. Most notably, the birthplace of commercial ranching took place at Rancho de las Cabras. This was a ranching outpost for Mission San Francisco de la Espada where the first ranches and cowboys settled near Floresville in Wilson County. By the 1800s, Anglo American, German and Polish settlers began moving into the area. Soon after, the state Legislature founded Wilson County on February 13, 1860. The county was named after James Charles Wilson, who was an early settler of Texas and a state legislator.

Throughout the years, Wilson County has played a significant role in south Texas history. After the Civil War, Wilson County's population underwent the greatest growth due to the completion of the San Antonio and Aransas Pass Railway, which reached Floresville in 1886. By the early nineteenth century, farmers who were once known for cotton crops as the most important cash crop, then diversified into a wider range of peas, watermelons, and peanuts. Today, some call Floresville the "Peanut Capital of Texas." One of the county's best known natives is John Connally, who was born in 1917 near Floresville. Later Connally served as governor and survived a shot during President John F. Kennedy's assassination in 1963. One hundred and fifty years has shaped the county and development of Texas through its historical sites, involvement in diversified farming, ranching, and even oil discovery.

Wilson County includes towns and cities such as Carpenter, Floresville, La Vernia, Pandora, Poth, Saspamco, Stockdale, Sutherland Springs, Grass Pond Colony, Kicaster, Doseido Colony, and Sandy Hills. It totals 809 square miles and has a population of more than 40,000.

From a legacy in ranching, to its honorable natives and rich historical culture, Wilson County celebrating its sesquicentennial year is a milestone for the county and for Texas. I am honored to have had this time to recognize Wilson County on its sesquicentennial year. I thank you for this time, Madam Speaker.

NATIVE HAWAIIAN GOVERNMENT  
REORGANIZATION ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

## HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 23, 2010*

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Native American Caucus, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2314, the Na-

tive Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act, which will formally extend the federal policy of self-determination and self-governance to Native Hawaiians.

I would like to acknowledge Speaker PELOSI, Majority Leader REID, and Chairman RAHALL for their leadership in bringing this milestone bill to the floor. I would also like to thank my colleague Congressman AKAKA, the author of this legislation, who worked so hard for so many years to give Native Hawaiians the opportunity for self governance.

Mr. Speaker, the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act provides Native Hawaiians with an opportunity for self determination and cultural preservation, while empowering them to be an equal partner with the state and federal government. They will finally be on equal footing in federal policies toward American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians.

I am pleased to champion H.R. 2314, which provides the self governing opportunities that have been denied to this community for so long. Native Hawaiians should have the same opportunity for cultural preservation and self-determination as indigenous people on the mainland U.S. Just to be clear, this bill does not recognize a Native Hawaiian government upon passage, nor exempt a Native Hawaiian government from any provision of the U.S. Constitution, Federal law, or taxation.

Mr. Speaker, I support this bill because it will finally extend the federal policy of recognition to Native Hawaiians. This legislation is yet another example of how Congress is responding to calls for change in America.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 2314.

TRIBUTE TO PATRICIA SOWELL  
HARRIS

## HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 2, 2010*

Mr. CLYBURN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding business, civic and community leader who is a wonderful example of why we celebrate Black History Month. Patricia Sowell Harris is the global chief diversity officer for McDonald's Corporation in Oak Brook, Illinois. Under her leadership, McDonald's has become a global leader in workplace diversity.

I am proud to say that Patricia is a fellow South Carolinian and a good friend. She was born and raised in the small town of McBee. One of 11 children, she earned her bachelor's degree in public administration and personnel administration from Roosevelt University in Chicago. In 1976, she was hired by the McDonald's Corporation to work in its legal department. Nine years later, she was named the company's affirmative action manager. Pamela was appointed assistant vice president in 1997, and in 2001 she was appointed to her current position as global chief diversity officer.

Charged with spearheading McDonald's diversity initiatives, Ms. Harris responded with considerable resolve and her efforts have produced astonishing successes. As a result, McDonald's is widely recognized as a diverse and welcoming place to work. Fortune maga-

zine listed McDonald's 2 years in a row as the no. 1 company for diversity. Other publications that have lauded McDonald's for its inclusive philosophy include Essence, Hispanic Business, Latina Style and Black Enterprise.

Patricia's hard work has not gone unnoticed in other quarters. In the course of her career she has been the recipient of many accolades and tributes. She was awarded the National Restaurant Association's Salute to Excellence and was inducted into their 2006 Hall of Diplomats. Working Mother magazine called Patricia one of the top 10 diversity champions in the country. McDonald's presented her with the Eagle Award and named its annual award for achievements in diversity the "Pat Harris Diversity Award."

Her ascent through the ranks of the McDonald's Corporation is a testament to her professionalism and strong work ethic. Her extensive work in her community is a demonstration of her imitable character and strong moral foundation. She has said that "the best accomplishment one can receive is to be asked to serve and give back to the community." Her unyielding commitment to this philosophy is evident in her numerous philanthropic pursuits.

Patricia is a founding member and former chair of the Multicultural Foodservice and Hospitality Alliance and a founding member and past board member of the Women's Foodservice Forum. She is the chair of the NAACP ACT-SO Advisory Council and is the board president of the Y-Me National Breast Cancer Organization. She is also a board member of DePaul University's Business and Ethics Committee, the International Franchise Association's Diversity Institute and co-chair of the Rainbow/PUSH EXCEL board of directors.

In 2009, Wiley published her book None of Us Is as Good as All of Us, which documents her rise from humble beginnings as a farmer's daughter to the top ranks of American business. The book also details her corporate philosophy and the steps McDonald's has taken under her leadership to improve workplace diversity.

Patricia currently resides in Chicago and is a proud mother and grandmother to her son Dwayne and granddaughter Cydnii.

Madam Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating Patricia Sowell Harris on her impressive career at McDonald's and her ongoing commitment to her community. I am proud to add my voice to the chorus of individuals, media outlets and organizations that have praised Ms. Harris for her many accomplishments. She serves as a tremendous example of why we celebrate the contributions of African Americans during Black History Month, and I commend her for all that she has done and will continue to do on behalf of people of color.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

## HON. PETER T. KING

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 2, 2010*

Mr. KING of New York. Madam Speaker, I was not present for votes on Friday, February 26, 2010. Had I been present, this is how I would have voted: On rollcall #69 I would have voted "no." On rollcall #70 I would have voted "yes." On rollcall #71 I would have